

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

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Office of the Director

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Memorandum

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission
FROM: *HS for*
Harriet Tregoning, Director
DATE: May 11, 2007
SUBJECT: **ZC 05-35 - Final Report - Stanton Square**
Square 5877, Lots 60-61, 78, 832, 835, 853-858, 873, 878, 879.

I. SUMMARY and RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends approval of the applicant's request to develop the currently vacant 8.1 acre parcel in Square 5877 with 187 residential units, subject to conditions that may be specified by DDOT. OP supports the applicant's request for a PUD-related map amendment from the R-3 District to the R-5-A District to accommodate the flexibility necessary for the rear and side yards of the proposed residences.

II. APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF

The Horning Brothers requested a consolidated PUD and related Map Amendment for the proposed development of Stanton Square at the intersection of Pomeroy Road and Stanton Road, Southeast, in Square 5877. The parcel represents 8.1 acres of consolidated Lots 60-61, 78, 832, 835, 853-858, 873, 878, and 879 and is currently zoned R-3. The PUD-related map amendment would rezone the property from R-3 to R-5-A to accommodate the proposed development of 187 townhomes.

III. SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION

The 8.1-acre site, currently zoned R-3, is located just north of Suitland Parkway on Stanton Road between the Hillside and Fort Stanton neighborhoods. It is an irregularly shaped property bound by Elvans Road to the south and east, Stanton Road to the west, Pomeroy Road to the northeast and Wilkinson Elementary School to the north. A sharp 32-foot drop divides the property into a lower and upper portion as the property slopes steeply towards the west. The applicant's March 8, 2007 submission clearly illustrates the topography on the Existing Conditions Plan (C.01).

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 05-35

EXHIBIT NO. 26

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.05-35
EXHIBIT NO.26

IV. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 187 new townhomes would front dedicated public streets, with a private alley system for access to rear-loading garages. Emphasis was placed on the preservation of open space along the most steeply sloped portion of the site, and an on-site storm water management system, including a combination of storm filters, and bio-retention systems.

At the February 12, 2007 meeting, the Commission expressed concerns regarding the extent of impermeable surface in the project, and the applicant subsequently reduced the roadway area with an increase in the total building area. This has allowed for a corresponding increase in the affordable housing component of the project. However, the applicant has also stated that DDOT’s right-of-way requirements for wider streets constrain the design for increased open space.

Streets of varying widths were designed to accommodate two-way traffic with parallel parking on one or both sides of the street for streets between 30 and 38 feet wide. On-street parking is expected to provide approximately 37 additional spaces for residents’ guests. Garages will be included on each residential lot to accommodate the number of required residential parking spaces. Altogether, the development will provide up to 226 parking spaces. The applicant met with DDOT, to discuss the right-of-ways which do not meet DDOT’s width requirements.

A redesigned landscape plan also includes a tot lot and terraces supported by four retaining walls in the steeply sloped area of the site. A walking path and a stair to the upper level residential area are now included supported by smaller modular retaining walls which are intended to stabilize the steep slope, while providing a landscaped connection between the two areas. Extensive landscaping would be included throughout the development by providing shade trees with extensive canopies at maturity.

The comparative site plan data is tabulated as follows:

| Requirement | R-5-A (MOR) | R-5-A /PUD | Proposed Design (At Setdown) | Proposed Design (March, 8,2007 Submission) |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Height | 40’ (3-stories) | 60’ (3 stories) | Variable- up to 40.25 ft. | Variable – up to 40’ 3” |
| FAR | 0.9 | 1.0 | 0.9 | 0.90 |
| Lot Occupancy | 40% | 40% | 31% | 31% |
| Gross Floor Area | 317,930 Sq. ft. | 353,256 Sq. ft. | 318,024 Sq. ft. | 317,438 Sq. ft. |
| Green Space Roadway | N/A | N/A | 30%- 106,037 Sq. ft. 29% - 104,608 Sq. ft. | 33% - 116,414 Sq. ft. 25% - 88,988 Sq. ft. |
| Parking | 1 per dwelling unit | 1 per dwelling unit or 187 spaces | 226 spaces | 267-287 spaces (36 on street) |

Table 1

| Number of Units | Unit Type by Size |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 43 | 14' x 36' RL |
| 20 | 14' x 36' 2-story |
| 51 | 16' x 36' RL |
| 10 | 18' x 36' FL |
| 50 | 18' x 36' RL |
| 13 | 20' x 36' SL |

Table 2

A variety of two and three bedroom single-family townhouses are proposed, which includes five sizes of townhomes with rear-loaded and front-loaded garages. The town home structures are designed to complement the new development in the surrounding neighborhood, including the Townes at Hillsdale located at the corner of Pomeroy and Stanton Road. A mix of building materials would include a mixture of brick, siding and trim and would be carried throughout the site. The façade details are integral to ensuring variety in the streetscape.

All residences would be for sale, with up to two-thirds at market rate to encourage diversity in incomes in the new neighborhood. One third of the units would be devoted to sale of applicants between 60% and 80% on the AMI.

OP’s setdown report asked the applicant to:

- Document the application of “green design” elements for the residential development;
- Meet with WASA and/or the Department of the Environment on the proposed storm water and erosion controls for the site to determine its adequacy due to the area’s soil association;
- Document DHCD’s financial agreement for this project; and
- Provide material samples at the public hearing.

At the February 12, 2007 Commission meeting, the applicant was requested to address:

- Increasing the amount of green space in the project;
- Provision of additional information about on-site water retention;
- Façade treatment of the townhomes; and
- The expected price range of the market rate units.

These issues are discussed in subsequent sections of the report.

V. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND PUBLIC POLICIES

Section 2403.4 requires that the proposed PUD is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and with other adopted public policies and active programs related to the subject site.

The proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, including the following Major Themes of the Plan:

- Section 102 - Stabilizing and Improving District Neighborhoods
- Section 110 – Promoting Enhanced Public Safety
- Section 111 – Providing for Diversity and Overall Social Responsibilities

These themes are also evident in the policies for housing outlined in the Housing Element of the new Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Map (Dec. 2006) (awaiting NCPC and Congressional reviews), including:

H-1.1 Expanding Housing Supply 503

Expanding the housing supply is a key part of the District’s vision to create successful neighborhoods. Along with improved transportation and shopping, better neighborhood schools and parks, preservation of historic resources, and improved design and identity, the production of housing is essential to the future of our neighborhoods.

Policy H-1.1.3: Balanced Growth

Strongly encourage the development of new housing on surplus, vacant and underutilized land in all parts of the city. Ensure that a sufficient supply of land is planned and zoned to enable the city to meet its long-term housing needs, including the need for low- and moderate-density single family homes as well as the need for higher-density housing. 503.4

Policy H-1.1.5: Housing Quality

Require the design of affordable housing to meet the same high-quality architectural standards required of market-rate housing. Regardless of its affordability level, new or renovated housing should be indistinguishable from market rate housing in its exterior appearance and should address the need for open space and recreational amenities, and respect the design integrity of adjacent properties and the surrounding neighborhood. 503.6

Policy H-1.2.3: Mixed Income Housing

Focus investment strategies and affordable housing programs to distribute mixed income housing more equitably across the entire city, taking steps to avoid further concentration of poverty within areas of the city that already have substantial affordable housing. 504.10

The proposed development will provide much needed upgraded infill housing in Ward 8. The residential use will help improve public safety in the neighborhood, as it will provide more “eyes on the street” and establishes a residential scale and character along a major route in the southeast portion of the District. The proposal complements the recent development of the Hillsdale Townhomes to the west of the project site in terms of housing type and adds to the current improvements to the housing stock and will be a significant contribution to the District’s housing capacity and to Ward 8’s housing revitalization.

The Stanton Road location will provide residents with easy access to employment destinations in the District and Maryland in support of smart growth principles, including the creation of a range of housing opportunities and choices. The property is located along many Metrobus routes, within a five minute ride to the Anacostia Metrorail Station or the Congress Heights Metrorail Station, both approximately one mile from the development. Additionally, Suitland Parkway provides access to many major routes in the District and Maryland.

The new Comprehensive Plan includes objectives for low-and moderate-income housing which is supported by the applicant’s commitment to provide 63 workforce affordable housing units. At least 20 of the units would be targeted to potential residents making up 60% of the AMI and at least 43 would be available to residents at 80% of the AMI.

The new Plan designates the Fort Stanton Neighborhood within the Far Southeast/Southwest Planning Area. Planning and Development Priorities include more housing suitable for families and young homeowners (1907.2(c)) in this sector, and includes addressing the low rate of homeownership by providing more owner occupied housing in new construction, as well as encouraging the construction of single family homes (Policy FSS 1.1.12). This development also meets the policy direction which seeks to replace existing housing patterns with mixed-income housing (FSS-2.6.3). The housing opportunities directive under FSS-2.3.2 encourage compatible infill development on vacant and underutilized land within the Fort Stanton neighborhood with an emphasis on low to moderate density housing designed for families. The proposal includes two and three bedroom residences, scarce in new developments and more recently catered to younger urban condominium-seeking residents. The policy also directs environmentally sensitive development in the area as “special care should be taken to respect the area’s topography, and avoid erosion...”

VI. GENERALIZED LAND USE MAP

The existing and future Generalized Land Use Map recommends the subject property for moderate density residential. The proposed development at an FAR of 0.9 is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan’s Generalized Land Use Map and does not exceed with the matter-of-right density of the R-5-A. Therefore, OP supports the PUD-related rezoning request to accommodate the moderate density residential proposed for the site.

VII. ZONING

The site is designed to conform to the permitted height, lot occupancy and FAR of the PUD related map amendment from R-3 to R-5-A. The applicant is requesting that the project be approved in accordance with the special exception requirements of Sections 353 and 2516 for new residential development in the R-5-A Zone. The R-3, R-5-A Districts and R-5-A/PUD standards and the project’s proposals are compared:

| Requirement | R-3 | R-5-A (MOR) | R-5-A /PUD | Proposed |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Height | 40’ (3-stories) | 40’ (3-stories) | 60’ (3 stories) | Variable- up to 40.25 feet |
| Min. Lot Area | 3,000 | Prescribed by the Board | Prescribed by the Board | N/A |
| Min. Lot Width | 20’ | TBD | TBD | Variable (Units vary in width - 14 feet- 20 feet) |
| FAR | None prescribed | 0.9 | 1.0 | 0.9 |
| Lot Occupancy | 40 % | 40% | 40% | 31% |
| Rear Yards | 20 feet | 20 feet | 20 feet | 6 feet (Needs Relief) |
| Side Yards | 8 | 8 feet | 8 feet | 4 feet (Needs Relief) |
| Off Street Parking | 1 per dwelling unit | 1 per dwelling unit | 1 per dwelling unit or 187 spaces | 267 spaces |

Table 3 – Townhouses (187 units)

FLEXIBILITY

Flexibility is required from 2516.6 (b) which requires 25 feet in width for vehicular ingress where only 22 feet is provided for Units 813-187 and units 178 to 182. Variance relief is also required from the rear and side yard requirements as 6 feet and 4 feet respectively are proposed. The applicant has stated that this is necessary due to the slope of the property and the need to provide front-loaded and rear loaded parking. OP supports the requested relief as it minimizes the grading of the site and permits the residences to act as retaining walls throughout the site. The resulting residential designs are similar to the newer style town homes in the District as well as those in long standing row house districts such as Adams Morgan and Mount Pleasant.

OP believes that the requested flexibility is minimal in comparison to the benefits that would be derived in providing additional homeownership opportunities for underserved middle income District residents.

VII. PUD EVALUATION STANDARDS

In order to maximize the use of the site consistent with the Zoning Regulations and be compatible with the surrounding community, the applicant is requesting that the proposal be reviewed as a consolidated PUD. The purpose and standards for Planned Unit Developments are outlined in 11 DCMR, Chapter 24. **Section 2400.1** states that a PUD is “designed to encourage high quality developments that provide public benefits.” This will allow the utilization of the flexibility stated in Section 2400.2.

The overall goal is to permit flexibility of development and other incentives, such as increased building height and density; provided, that the project offers a commendable number of quality public benefits and that it protects and advances the public health, safety, welfare, and convenience.”

The new residential community will create 187 new residential units for the District, one third of which would be dedicated to affordable housing for low to middle-income families. Also of benefit are the proposed market rate units which would ensure a diversity of income to the neighborhood. The proposed site design focuses the homes towards the street frontage, including along Stanton Road and Pomeroy Street. This improves the residential character of Stanton Road, as well as public safety along a much neglected thoroughfare. The community has supported the development of single family townhomes rather than the garden-style apartment complexes typical of the area and the R-5-A District.

Section 2403.3 requires that the impact of the project on the surrounding area and on the operation of city services and facilities shall not be found to be unacceptable, but instead shall be found to be either favorable, capable of being mitigated, or acceptable given the quality of the public benefits in the project.

The application was forwarded to the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), Fire and Emergency Management (FEMS), DC Water and Sewer Authority (DCWASA) and the DC Department of the Environment (DOE). Comments were received from DCWASA (attached) and are highlighted below. The applicant has met with DDOT and DDOT’s comments will be forwarded under separate cover. Other agency comments have not been received to date.

Several meetings and discussions with neighborhood leaders have been held concerning the proposed development and the community is in support of the proposal. OP believes that the project would be beneficial to the surrounding neighborhood as it would increase the housing stock on long vacant parcels of land.

There are several recreational and educational facilities within walking distance of the site, including Fort Stanton Park and Fort Stanton recreation Center. The Anacostia Museum and Center is within a half mile from the site and Wilkinson Elementary abuts the property to the north and Moten Elementary is northeast of the site on Elvans Road. The Freedom Youth Academy is located outside of Stanton Park, west of the Fort Stanton Recreation Center.

Transportation Issues

The applicant convened a recent meeting with DDOT (May 7, 2007) to discuss the transportation issues of the site's design including the circulation and proposed public street dedication, roadway, sidewalk and right-of-way widths, driveway separation of front loaded garages and the distance of driveway entrances from the streets' intersections along Stanton Road.

DDOT suggested that along with the roadways, alleys should also be dedicated to the public system and constructed to DDOT standards. The applicant has agreed to examine this issue. In addition, the turn radii for trash trucks at the dead end alleys should also be reviewed to meet DDOT's specifications. The applicant was asked to include appropriate traffic controls throughout the site to mitigate potential speeding and ADA requirements for the width of sidewalks.

More importantly, given the Commission's and OP's request to reduce the impervious area dedicated to street right-of-ways, the applicant requested DDOT consider a modification to the District's Highway Plan to permit the design of the roadways as proposed. In some instances, this requires DDOT's waiver for a two-foot deviation from its standards for the street right-of-way. DDOT has agreed to consider this request and would submit comments under separate cover.

Water and Sewer

DCWASA reported to OP that there is adequate capacity to handle the expected sanitary flows for the proposed development and that the capacities of the storm sewers abutting the property would adequately contain the expected storm flows and the project would have to adhere to the DOE's requirements for sediment and erosion control. DCWASA will issue a water and sewer availability certificate and recommend the issuance of a building permit if the final project plans meet DCWASA's requirements.

VIII. PUBLIC BENEFITS AND AMENITIES

Section 2403.9 addresses the requirement for public benefits and amenities as follows:

“Public benefits and project amenities of the proposed PUD may be exhibited and documented in any of the following or additional categories:

- (a) Urban design, architecture, landscaping, or creation or preservation of open spaces;*
- (b) Site planning, and efficient and economical land utilization;*
- (c) Effective and safe vehicular and pedestrian access, transportation management measures, connections to public transit service, and other measures to mitigate adverse traffic impacts;*
- (f) Housing and affordable housing;*
- (h) Environmental benefits, such as stormwater runoff controls and preservation of open space or trees;*
- (i) Uses of special value to the neighborhood or the District of Columbia as a whole;*

The main benefits of the proposed application thus far are the market rate townhomes for moderate income residents and the dedication of public streets into the District’s transportation network. The proposal is supported by DHCD financing to include affordable housing for residents earning between 60% to 80% of AMI. Approximately 120 units will be sold at market rate between \$300,000 and \$350,000. The Commission requested a breakout of material percentages and the applicant provided the following:

Brick front – 45% (84 units); Brick along water table – 47% (88 units); and No brick – 8% (15 units). Rear decks have also been included in the design for all townhomes, except for the two story units.

With respect to the proposed density of the development, the applicant has explained that the number and sizes of the units are instrumental to the design in an effort to create a diverse streetscape. The use of differing scales and materials would help create a dynamic streetscape along the Stanton and Pomeroy Street frontages and the interior of the site. The design includes front loaded and rear loaded garages with access provided by private alley systems. The architecture and landscaping will enhance new construction in the neighborhood and the slab on grade and English basements designs are efforts to respect the topography of the site and limit the amount of grading that may be necessary to accommodate the development. The street grid pattern is compatible with the surrounding street system and its’ intent is to focus views on green space, as well as the individual unit architecture. The landscaped garden retaining walls are an integral feature of the site due to the severe topography which separates the site into an upper and lower level. Smaller green spaces throughout the site front the units and have been included in the private alley system. A tot lot has also been included in the elevated portion of the site as a series of open spaces on the lower elevation can be used by residents for outdoor recreation.

Dedicated public streets and sidewalks would connect to the surrounding neighborhood and alleys may also be dedicated to the system after final discussions with DDOT. The applicant’s initial traffic study concluded that the proposal would not have any appreciable adverse traffic impacts on the local area. Sufficient parking would be provided on-site including 226 spaces off-site and 37 on-street parking

spaces. This exceeds the required number of spaces required by § 2101. A revised traffic analysis has been referred to DDOT.

The environmental benefits of the proposed development are reflected in the low-impact strategies proposed for the stormwater runoff for the site. Bioretention areas and Filterra units have been included to control both water quality and water quantity of runoff from the impervious areas. The applicant's plan adequately explains the application, design and proposed location of the systems (L1.02). Based on similar PUD submissions, DOH and DOE support this type of low impact design. However, engineering plans must show that the installations would satisfy the District's Stormwater Manual requirements. This review is coordinated by both WASA and DOE at the building permit phase.

Beyond the public benefits discussed above, the following amenities have been negotiated with the community:

- A financial contribution of \$30,000 to the Fort Stanton Civic Association for the purchase of computers including service and technical support service contracts for the Fort Stanton Recreation Center.
- \$30,000 would also be contributed to the ANC in conjunction with DDOT's assistance for the purchase and placement of 30 commercial trash receptacles, 30 decorative pole banners for placement in surrounding neighborhoods.
- \$15,000 towards the creation and installation of welcome signage to the Fort Stanton and Hillside neighborhoods as requested by the ANC to be located at Suitland Parkway and Stanton road, Fort place and Bruce Place, and Martin Luther King Avenue and Howard Road.
- The applicant has agreed to work with MANNA, Inc. to conduct a homebuying workshop series for community members.

This project benefits the District as a whole, as it furthers the housing revitalization in the District's southeast quadrant. It also introduces low impact methods in areas where none previously existed to the benefit of the Oxon Run system and is an example of smart growth principles supported by District policy.

IX. AGENCY REFERRALS AND COMMENTS

OP requested comments from:

- District Department of Transportation (DDOT);
- Fire and Emergency Management (FEMS)
- Department of Health (DOH) and DDOE; and
- D.C. Water and Sewage Authority (WASA).

No comments have been received to date. However, DDOT's comments would be forwarded under separate cover to the Commission.

X. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

ANC 8A is supporting the development concept and has submitted a report to the record. The applicant has held several meetings with community members, including the ANC and the Anacostia Coordinating Council to discuss the project and the submitted amenity package. The ANC's recommendation will be forwarded to the Commission prior to the public hearing.

RECOMMENDATION

OP believes that the proposed PUD is not inconsistent with the elements of the Comprehensive Plan and promotes smart growth development in its choice of location and design. The proposal provides moderate density single-family housing for low and moderate income residents in this quadrant of the District and the related map amendment from R-3 to R-5-A would accommodate a more compact building design as an alternative to the more consumptive development pattern of the lower density residential land use. The provision of sidewalk areas would connect to the street system to create a pedestrian environment as a key component of smart growth. In addition, the development would allow the vacant parcel to be integrated into a long-standing community, already served by infrastructure and the public transportation system of Metrorail and Metrobus.

Therefore, OP supports the applicant’s development proposal subject to conditions that may be specified by DDOT.

Attachment:

1. DC WASA Report

ATTACHMENT 1

TRANSMITTAL

TO: Karen Thomas
Development Review Specialist
DC Office of Planning

FROM: Rizwan Elahi, Engineer III
Planning & Design Branch
DC Water and Sewer Authority

SUBJECT: Zoning Commission Case 05-35
Planned Unit Development (PUD)
Stanton Square

DCWASA reviewed the zoning application for this project as transmitted by the DC Office of Planning dated April 19, 2007. DC WASA comments are as follows:

Water Requirements: The proposed development area is part of Anacostia 2nd High pressure zone. The applicant should extend the water main through the development from the existing 16-inch water main in Elvans Road to the existing 8-inch water main in Pomeroy/Stanton Roads. If the above mentioned water main is not possible to be built, the water main in Erie Street, SE may need to be replaced due to the age of the main.

Sewer Requirements: This area is part of the separate sanitary sewer system. The capacity of the sanitary sewers in this area is adequate to handle the expected sanitary flows for the proposed development.

Storm Sewer Requirements: This area is part of the separate storm sewer system. The capacities of the storm sewers abutting this property are adequate to convey the expected storm flows for the proposed development. However, if the storm flow is discharged in to the 15-inch storm sewer in Stanton Road, flowing south from the intersection of Elvans and Stanton Roads, the 15-inch storm sewer will be required to be replaced with an 18-inch storm sewer. It should be noted that this project will have to adhere to the DC Department of Environment requirements for storm water management and for sediment and erosion control.

Assessment: All mains associated with water, sanitary sewer, and storm water in public streets must be designed to DCWASA standards. DCWASA will review the project plans that the applicant submits for a public space permit to verify that the storm water discharge to DCWASA sewers has been appropriately computed and that there is adequate capacity in the sewers. DCWASA will also review the water and sewer facilities in terms of sizing and layout and will issue a water and sewer availability certificate and recommend the issuance of a building permit if the final project plans meet DCWASA requirements.